

Arizona Department of Water Resources

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For Immediate Release:
February 2, 2006
Janet Napolitano,
Governor
Herb Guenther,
Director

NEWS RELEASE

Public Information Office
(602) 771 8430

Drought coordinating group holds initial meeting February 9

The Arizona Drought Task Force Interagency Coordinating Group will hold its first meeting February 9 to begin assessing the need for drought preparedness.

"We've had more than 100 days without rain in the Valley," said Herb Guenther, director of the Arizona Department of Water Resources. "The seasonal outlook indicates these conditions will persist or even intensify throughout much of Arizona for an extended period of time.

"It's time to begin considering a response to drought conditions," Guenther added.

Resource officials and experts formulated a Drought Preparedness Plan in 2004. The plan calls for the interagency coordinating group to "assess, implement, and develop response options" and make recommendations to Governor Janet Napolitano on appropriate "pre-drought mitigation and adaptation."

It is composed of representatives from state and federal agencies, as well as non-governmental organizations, so that the group will provide integrated planning and response to drought for all lands – public and private - in Arizona.

The interagency group will:

- Recommend to the Governor the resources needed to implement Arizona's Drought Preparedness Plan,
- Coordinate and integrate drought planning and management in the state, and
- Review the plan each year and recommend improvements in monitoring, implementation, and response.

The group is chaired by ADWR and the Arizona Division of Emergency Management. Other agencies represented include:

For the State:

- Governor's office
- Corporation Commission
- Commission on Indian Affairs
- Department of Agriculture
- Department of Commerce
- Department of Environmental Quality
- Game & Fish Department
- Department of Health Services
- Department of Real Estate
- State Land Department
- State Parks

For the federal government:

- US Department of Agriculture:
 - Natural Resources Conservation Service
 - Farm Services
 - Forest Service
- US Department of the Interior:
 - Bureau of Reclamation
 - Bureau of Indian Affairs
 - Fish & Wildlife Service
 - Bureau of Land Management
 - National Park Service
 - Geological Survey

Celebrating 25 Years

- Department of Transportation
- State Forester

Others:

- Salt River Project
- Central Arizona Water Conservation District
- Non-governmental Organizations

The meeting will be held:

- From 3 to 4:30 p.m.
- Thursday, February 9
- In the Middle & Upper Verde Conference rooms
- At the Arizona Department of Water Resources
- 3550 N. Central Avenue – Second floor

For information on ADWR's new location and parking options in the area, visit the department's website at http://www.azwater.gov/dwr/Library/Includes/ADWR_Location.htm